

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH

FEBRUARY 21, 2012

CALFRESH TRAFFICKING

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is the federal name for the Food Stamp or CalFresh Program in California. SNAP is the first line of defense against hunger and malnutrition in the United States by assisting low-income individuals and families purchase eligible food items from authorized food retailers. Benefits are loaded onto an Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card that can only be redeemed for eligible food items at authorized stores.

In June 2004, the United States Department of Agriculture-Food and Nutrition Service replaced paper food stamp coupons with EBT cards in response to the sale/purchase of food stamps benefits for cash, called "Trafficking," an illegal activity punishable by criminal prosecution. While the misuse of benefits has dropped significantly as a result of replacing paper food stamps with EBT cards, trafficking still diverted an estimated \$330 million annually nationwide from SNAP.

Fraud undermines public confidence in local government and the CalFresh Program. We must make every effort to meet the highest standards in protecting taxpayer dollars and ensuring that CalFresh benefits are used only as intended, to purchase food for low-income families and individuals.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors direct the Chief Executive Officer, in conjunction with the Acting Director of the Department of Public Social Services, and in consultation with the District Attorney, to report back in **30 days** on the development of a comprehensive program to identify, prosecute and prevent CalFresh trafficking in Los Angeles County. This effort should include working with the United States Department of Agriculture-Food and Nutrition Service; the United States Department of Agriculture-Food and Nutrition Service - Office of the Inspector General; and the California Department of Social Services; and include an assessment of the possible use of Data Mining technology.

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